



Ministry
of Defence

Defence Business Services

Secretariat
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Ref: FOI2023/04994

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[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

17 May 2023

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your email of 18 April 2023 to the Ministry of Defence (MOD), in response to our request for clarification of your previous correspondence in which you requested the following information:

"Please can you provide me with the qualifications that are required to be held by the specialists, to enable them to process claims?"

Please can you provide me with the amount of specialists currently employed to process claims?"

Please can you provide me with the amount of current claims required to be process by your department at present?"

You have clarified that when you refer to "specialists", you mean "Medical Officers".

I am treating your correspondence as a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA).

A search for the information has now been completed within the MOD and I can confirm that some information in scope of your request is held.

I can confirm that details of the DBS Medical Advisers (MA's) specific qualifications are not held.

A total of 21 MA's are currently employed by Defence Business Services (DBS), with a further 3 posts currently vacant.

Over the two schemes, the War Pension Scheme (WPS) and Armed Forces Compensation Scheme (AFCS), as at 30 April 2023, which is the latest date that figures are available for, there were 11,005 live cases. This number covers all the different stages of consideration so, for instance, some will be awaiting medical evidence gathering, the arrival of service, documentation or awaiting notification of decision.

Under Section 16 (Help and Assistance) of the FOIA, you may find it helpful to be aware that all DBS MA's are registered and fully licensed medical practitioners undergoing annual summative and formative appraisal. They usually join the Department following a successful career in some branch of clinical medicine relevant to the Armed Forces. This includes general practice, orthopaedics, ophthalmology, mental health and public health.

On joining they are trained in medico-legal determinations and evidence-based medicine, and the military no-fault compensation schemes. In post they undertake regular continuing professional development which may be general or informed by particular case types or issues raised, both medical and legal.

Not every case which is considered under the AFCS will require advice from a Medical Adviser or need to be medically certified.

If you have any queries regarding the content of this letter, please contact this office in the first instance.

If you wish to complain about the handling of your request, or the content of this response, you can request an independent internal review by contacting the Information Rights Compliance team, Ground Floor, MOD Main Building, Whitehall, SW1A 2HB (e-mail CIO-FOI-IR@mod.gov.uk). Please note that any request for an internal review should be made within 40 working days of the date of this response.

If you remain dissatisfied following an internal review, you may raise your complaint directly to the Information Commissioner under the provisions of Section 50 of the Freedom of Information Act. Please note that the Information Commissioner will not normally investigate your case until the MOD internal review process has been completed. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at: Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF. Further details of the role and powers of the Information Commissioner can be found on the Commissioner's website at <https://ico.org.uk/>.

Yours sincerely



Defence Business Services Secretariat